

George Matlack House
409 Westtown Road (LR 15090), east
of West Chester
West Chester Vicinity (West Goshen Township)
Chester County
Pennsylvania

HABS No. PA-1221

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PA,
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PHOTOGRAPHS

HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20243

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY HABS No. PA-1221

GEORGE MATLACK HOUSE

Location: 409 Westtown Road (LR 15090), east of West Chester, West Chester Vicinity (West Goshen Township), Chester County, Pennsylvania.

Present Owner: Richard F. Matlat, 409 Westtown Road, West Chester, Pennsylvania.

Statement of Significance: The manner in which this house was built seems typical of a great number of Chester County farm houses. The two-story brick east section (three bays) was built circa 1786 as an addition to an old log or plank house, which then became the kitchen. This kitchen was later demolished and replaced with the west stone section (two bays) circa 1811, forming the present central hall plan house. Thus, as the prosperity of the family permitted, the house was enlarged and improved. This house also retains some fine original interior woodwork.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Original and subsequent owners: George Matlack and family 1781-1877; Isaac Rodenboh and family 1878-1886; Edward and Horace T. Walter 1886-1930; John S. Garrett Jr. 1930-1944; Charles H. Craig 1945-1948; James J. Logue, Jr. 1948-1953; Richard F. Matlat 1953 to date.
2. Date of erection: The house was built in two sections. The brick east section (three bays) was built circa 1786 as an addition to a log or plank house. The log house was demolished and replaced with the stone west section (two bays) circa 1811.
3. Architect, builder, suppliers: Unknown.
4. Original plan, construction: Unknown.
5. Alterations and additions: As mentioned, the east and west sections were built at different times. A lean-to was added to the west elevation and a one-bay entrance porch was added to the north elevation.

6. Important old views and references: Sources of information to be found in the Chester County Historical Society, West Chester, Pennsylvania-Classified printed and manuscript files under the heading West Goshen Township. Lands.

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: This house evolved much like others in Chester County from a small log or plank house to a five-bay central hall plan house. Many original interior features remain.
2. Condition of fabric: Very good.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Over-all dimensions: The original east section is three bays wide and the west addition is two bays. The house is two-and-a-half stories.
2. Foundations: Stone.
3. Wall construction: The east section is brick and the west section is stone; both are stuccoed.
4. Chimneys: Two original brick chimneys remain, one at the east end and one at the west end.
5. Openings:
 - a. Doorways and doors: All seem to be original. The north (front) door is paneled.
 - b. Windows and shutters: All shutters seem to be original. The east section has six-over-nine-light double-hung sash windows, while the west windows are six-over-six-light. There is an arched window over the north entrance.
6. Roof:
 - a. Shape, covering: Gable roof with composition shingles.
 - b. Cornice, eaves: Seem original.
 - c. Dormers: None.

C. Description of Interior:

1. Floor plans: With the west addition, the house has a central hall plan with two rooms to either side. There is a vaulted cellar under the west section. The attic has a smoke room in the northwest section.
2. Stairways: Original; a two-run open-string staircase.
3. Flooring: Original, except second floor east rooms which have been replaced.
4. Wall and ceiling finish: Plaster.
5. Doorways and doors: All seem original, except doorway between the two east rooms which has been converted to a double doorway.
6. Trim: All original.
7. Hardware: Nearly all original.
8. Lighting: Modern electricity.
9. Heating: All fireplaces remain.

D. Site:

1. General setting and orientation: The house faces south and is set back from the road with meadows to the south.
2. Outbuildings: A springhouse remains.
3. Walks, driveways: None.
4. Landscaping, gardens: Shade trees and some planting.

Prepared by Bart Anderson
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